

REMARKS

Status of the Application

Claims 1-11 are the claims that are pending in the present application. Claims 1-10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph as being indefinite. Claims 1-5 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Dalton et al. (U.S. 6,787,091). Claims 6-7 and 9-10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dalton et al. Claim 11 has been withdrawn.

By this Amendment, Applicant is amending claim 1, is canceling claims 5-7, and is adding new claims 12 and 13.

Preliminary Matters

Applicant thanks the Examiner for considering and initialing the Information Disclosure Statement filed December 10, 2003.

Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner acknowledge Applicant's claim to foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119, as well as receipt of the certified priority document submitted December 10, 2003. Applicant also respectfully requests that the Examiner acknowledge acceptance of the drawings filed December 10, 2003.

Claim Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph

The Examiner has rejected claim 1-10 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite. The informalities noted by the Examiner have been corrected. Thus, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Prior Art Rejections

Claims 1-5 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Dalton et al. (U.S. 6,787,091).

Claims 6-7 and 9-10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dalton et al.

The Examiner alleges that Dalton discloses all of the elements of claim 1. Applicant respectfully disagrees.

Amended claim 1 recites, in part, “wherein the step (B) of tailoring the thermoplastic layer by applying heat and pressure thereto includes applying heat and pressure to the thermoplastic resin layer enclosing the core in a tailoring mold.” Dalton, on the other hand, teaches that *cooling* is performed during the compression/tailoring process, not that *heat* and pressure are applied to the thermoplastic resin layer in the tailoring mold.

Additionally, in the claimed invention, the mold used for the step (A) is different from the mold used for the step (B). Dalton, on the other hand, disclose that a premixed reaction mixture are injected under a hydraulic pressure into the cavity space to form and then thin layer of the thermoset or thermoplastic material of less than 0.03 inches is formed.

However, the cited reference fails to disclose and teach that two different molds are used for forming the cover layer having a desirable thickness in a range of 0.3 mm to 1.0 mm. That is, the method of Dalton requires that the cover material is injected into the cavity of one mold and at the same time the dimples are formed on the surface of the cover, because the method of Dalton does not separate the step for injection molding the cover material from the step for

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applying heat and pressure to the thermoplastic resin layer in a mold. Therefore, in the method disclosed by Dalton, the molding accuracy would be lower, when compared to the claimed method.

In the claimed method, the molding accuracy is high because the step for applying heat and pressure to the thermoplastic resin layer to form dimples in a mold is separate from the step for injection molding a thermoplastic resin around the core.

Based on the above arguments, amended claim 1 is patentable over the applied art. Claims 2-4 and 8-10 are patentable over the applied art at least by virtue of their dependency from amended claim 1.

New Claims

New claims 12 and 13 are dependent from amended claim 1. Therefore, claims 12 and 13 are patentable at least by virtue of their dependency from amended claim 1.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

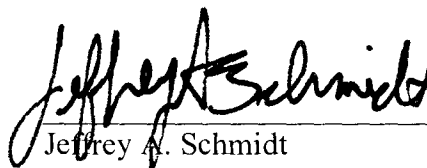
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Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey A. Schmidt", written over a horizontal line.

Jeffrey A. Schmidt

Registration No. 41,574

SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

WASHINGTON OFFICE

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